

Helena JSEC Meeting Minutes

February 15 2012

Members Present:

Tina Whitaker	lia Sophia
Cathy Wood	Student Assistance Foundation
Robert Ward	Enterprise Holdings
Alan Thompson	U of M Helena, College of Technology
Penny Fassett	American Chemet
Carolyn DeYoung	BC/BS of Montana
Tom Antonick	Office of Public Instruction
Deb Chouinard	Helena Job Service
Sandy Hamlin	Helena Job Service
Dave Laber	Helena Job Service

Guest:

Phil Osborne	Helena Job Service
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Introductions: All present stated their name and place of business.

January Minutes: Alan had one correction for the UM-Helena Nursing Recruitment Fair. The date has been changed to Tuesday, April 24th instead of April 10th. Tom motioned to approve the minutes, Robert brought a second. Minutes approved as written.

Treasurer Report: Robert reported that we currently have \$6,097.31 in the checking account. Dave will put together a financial statement for our next meeting. Robert announced that he is retiring from Enterprise Holdings at the end of this month. Therefore, he will be moving off the JSEC Board but is pretty sure he can get someone from Enterprise to join our group. Tina asked about signatures. Robert will check the signature cards and have them ready for the next meeting.

Manager's Report: As mentioned last month, the Helena Career Fair will be on March 21st from 11:00 to 4:00 at the Carroll College PE Center. In preparation, the week prior, Job Service will be offering resume classes on March 13th at 3:00 pm, the 14th at 2:00 pm, and the 15th at 6:00 pm. Also there are a couple of more times reserved so that if there is more demand, we can accommodate it. The flyers for the resume classes are on the IR website, but it is not apparent if you go directly to their website. You need to type in helenair.com/careers. Deb looked and there were no registrations yet. Cathy said she already registered, so others may want to check and make sure they are on the list.

The Helena Job Service is still quite busy. Additional work is coming our way with a pilot grant program for OJTs (on the job training). As compared to the current OJT program, the pilot will have more flexibility.

The WIA Program continues to work with our partner CTI (Career Training Institute) on the Adult Request for Proposal. Once finished, this will be good for 7 years.

Deb referred to the minutes from last month where Callie from Blue Cross suggested looking into career fair opportunities. January is traditionally Helena Job Service's highest door count, and might be a good month to consider that. IAWP (International Association of Workforce Professionals) had a fundraiser at the Helena Job Service last week, along with a raffle and bake sale. Part of the money raised will go towards purchasing dentures for one of our partner's participants.

Job Service Spotlight: Phil Osborne shared information about what the Workforce Consultants do to help support our clients, who are people looking for jobs and employers. There are five Workforce Consultants on the line. These staff have a great deal of diverse experience and education. Phil has 37 years in retail, middle to upper management, and the last 3 years he has spent instructing at Carroll College and UM-Helena. Others have backgrounds in teaching high school (2 Master Degrees), professional writer, business backgrounds, IT expert, and newspaper publisher. Because of the diverse experience, they team up with the client and play off one another's strengths.

Phil feels it's important to understand the employer's needs as well as the capabilities of the job seekers, and then they can direct them to an appropriate job. Job seekers are coached on how to present themselves and how to conduct an effective job search. As far as employers are concerned, staff help them put together job listings. They review employer self-managed job listings to make sure they are effective and legal, and listings are searched and matched for appropriate applicants.

Job Service also offers resume preparation, cover letter writing, interview preparation, and tips on thank you letters. There will be a career guidance discussion with job seekers, particularly when they are changing careers. Staff doesn't want to just get someone a job. If they are not qualified it ends up begin a waste of the employer's time and money on someone who is not going to work out. Then they are back at Job Service, and we do it all over again. There is success when we do a good job that matches somebody to the position and employer. Job Service does not screen however; since we need to cast a wide net to the entire community in a nondiscriminatory manner. Job seekers are helped in deciding whether or not they think they have the skill set the job is calling for. Staff look at specific requirements such as hard skills, and do not make interpretations about the person's ability. We will help them try to reveal the abilities they do have, but we do not overplay somebody in a position they are not qualified for.

Phil entertained any questions. Tina wondered if the clients were cooperative and receptive to appearance issues. Phil said he doesn't have a conversation with someone about that until he coaches them about going to an interview. By then they have developed a rapport, and a lot is at stake, versus when they are just trying to figure out what kind of job to apply for.

Robert asked if we roll played correct answers. Phil answered that we do behavioral interview practices, answering open-ended questions about what you do when faced with a certain situation. The jobs seeker is asked to bring a job which they are interested in. This helps them focus on what they need to do. Once they bring in the job listing, we will look it up in our system or the newspaper and write down the competencies that the employer is looking for. Then we ask, "Do you have these competencies?" "Are you close or can we help you get there with some training?" "Why do you want to do this job?"

Tina asked if Job Service works with any employers that struggle with their workforce and how they are of assistance to them. In these cases, staff might make a suggestion that perhaps their rate of pay is not competitive. Beyond that they really don't go there. Phil says he often refers employers to Sandy and Dave for guidance or assistance in those areas. He feels it is his job to teach someone how to do an effective job search and find the right people for the job

Tina wanted to know if job seekers need to be registered or have an appointment to come in for interview practice. They should be registered, but don't necessarily need an appointment. Helena Job Service puts on a class once a week on how to apply for State Jobs, which creates interest in the interview process. Staff then come up with plausible questions employers might ask; however, they don't want them walking away thinking they are ready. Job Seekers have to come up with the life

experience. Deb said that the mock interviews have been very successful at about 85%. Also, if someone comes in with drafts of questions and answers, they get help with those. Sandy offered that these interviewing practices help prepare the applicant for private and corporate sector jobs too, not just State. Basically it teaches them something about interviewing. Deb feels it also alleviates a lot of the anxiety that people have about interviewing, and is beneficial when they think they have it all figured out.

Phil mentioned that staff uses the STAR system (situation, task, action, and results) to help job seekers through the interview process. Tom suggested we add E for evaluation. Carolyn believes follow-up questions can get you a little more rounded picture. Deb added that clarifying questions are perfectly acceptable, and happen all of the time in interviews when they've given you something but you are not quite clear on it. Tom suggested to be safe and just make sure they are probing questions as opposed to leading questions.

Discussion continued about giving the interviewees 15 minutes or so to review all the questions. Tom thinks that if you get an impromptu person and just swing it at them they are ok, but if you get a process person they will be disadvantaged without questions provided ahead of time. Deb feels it is also important to give people feedback if possible.

Thanks to Phil for giving a little more insight into what Job Service offers.

March Meeting: Sandy alerted members that the next JSEC meeting is on the same day as the Helena Career Fair, and the last week of March is Spring Break. After some discussion, it was decided to move the meeting to the following day, Thursday, March 22nd.

Deb asked if we were aware of the MSEC/Manager's Meeting scheduled for April 16, 2012 in Missoula. JSEC members are invited to attend the break-out training sessions. Also, they are working on details for the Awards Banquet where they present JSEC awards.

Hidden Agenda: JMG is looking for judges for their Career Development Conference, as well as, pre-conference judging events. JSEC members have in the past judged resumes and posters prior to the conference. Sign-up sheets were provided. Sandy asked anyone interested to get the sheets back to her or Drea Brown, JMG State Director. As an option, we could do the judging as a group like we have done in the past.

Bryan (JS Office Techie) let Sandy know that the Scholarship Application has been downloaded 41 times, and the reference forms 19. Sandy said she hasn't received any applications yet, but she is anticipating a good turn-out. March 1st is the deadline for applications. Tom requested the Scholarship Committee stay after for a short meeting.

Sandy mentioned the 'Survey Monkey' that we are creating in lieu of our Employers Panel this year; it is in the process and should be completed soon.

The Helena School District is collaborating with Helena Job Service to explore the Prove-it Testing.

They want to see if it will be beneficial for their students, and are looking at what they can teach and test on that would help the students move beyond high school. They are also interested in talking to employers to see what kinds of skill tests/work sample tests they might be able to put into the curriculum. Suggestions were customer service skills and workplace etiquette. Once our survey is complete, it might give them more information on this subject.

Alan handed out a flyer for an event they are co-sponsoring. The Young Entrepreneur Program will provide the opportunity to network and learn about what it takes to start your own business. The event will be held in the Lower Commons at Carroll College on Tuesday, February 28.

On behalf of the Helena JSEC, Tina presented Robert with a card and gift certificate to Silver Star Restaurant in appreciation for his many years of excellent service. Robert has been with the Helena JSEC for nine years. In response to inquiries about the treasurer duties, Robert said that there are about 10 to 12 deposits per year and about that in payments per year, usually reimbursing Sandy or Dave for expenses. Most of the time is spent getting signature cards updated. Robert indicated that he would be here next month so that a smooth transition to the new treasurer could be made. Sandy will e-mail members with the duties and ask for nominations.

Meeting adjourned.